

The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is decorated with a traditional marbled paper pattern, featuring swirling, organic shapes in various shades of brown, tan, and beige. On the left side of the image, a portion of the book's spine is visible, which is bound in a dark, possibly black, material. Two silver-colored metal rings or rivets are visible on the spine. In the upper-middle section of the cover, there is a small, rectangular label with a red border. The label has a white background and contains the word "INCHLING" printed in a blue, sans-serif, all-caps font. The overall appearance is that of an old, well-used book.

INCHLING



Naucke Tohmie





THE CAST

Mr. Snail, who arrives too late to get into the play.

Water Bugs, Leaves, Fire Flies, Bats, Dew Drops.



INCHLING.

A forest scene. Above the forestage (R) hangs a huge cocoon. This set remains the same throughout the play. The necessary changes being indicated by movable props.

There are three Acts:

ACT I. Mr. Inchworm's Factory for Leaves Lmt. (Evening).

ACT II. (1) The encampment of the Terrible Mosquito (Night).

(2) The Acorn house.

ACT III. Played on top of a daisy. (Morning)

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Blanche Tohmie

I N C H L I N G

A Fantasy in Three Acts

By

Rem Remsen.

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Rem Remsen,  
Carmel, California.



## PROLOGUE

---

Moonlight in the forest. The prelude is played, then we hear the deep voice of the Wood God from the trees above:-

"Life that is free in the forest

Gather around me and listen

I, the great God of the woodlands

Come with the laws of the forest.

(the little white figure of Gyem appears in a spot light).

Gyem (mocking):

What are the laws of the forest?

What would they be without me--

A stupid old place-

With a moss grown face

And a God who sits up in a tree.

V of G: Gyem!

Gyem: Ay! Master.

V of G: Gyem thou love child of nature,

Begot ere grey moss touched the trees,

Mock not at this serious business

I am waiting for Spring on the breeze,

Gyem (mocking):

Then come out and dance in the moonlight

Or ride on the fog to the sea,

From this stupid old place

With a moss grown face

With a bat and a beetle and me.

(Exit dancing) Into the moonlight is crawling a huge green worm 30 feet long. It passes slowly across the stage and off.



(A very little Robin hops rapidly across the stage, demanding in a hungry voice):

Did anyone see that worm?

(her hurries off.)

(The Butteffly <sup>music</sup> song is heard. A beautiful butterfly appears for a moment, flutters its huge wings and fades out.)

(Dawn comes).

### Scene I

The whimsical setting of the first act is now clear. It is Mr. Inchworm's Factory for Leaves, L'm't. The shafts of light falling through the trees shows an odd and rickety piece of machinery. There are ladders leading up to platforms, and ladders going down again, and big wheels controlling rollers and little wheels and cogs and pullies and guy ropes. It is all very picturesque and impractable.

On stage Right is an inverted acorn which is evidently the habitation of a worm because it has a window, a door and a chimney from which smoke is issuing.

A little ant appears and pulls a rope. The factory whistle blows long and loud.

The ants begin to collect like so many little black dots covering the stage and climbing over the absurdly constructed machinery. Meeting each other with arms outstretched, curved like antennae, touching the palms and passing on to the next ant, on and on--one line enters on one side, another from the apposite side.

The line entering R. carries one message, "The leaves are not finished". To which the apposite side responds, "Spring will be late". That the ants look so much alike is the only reason I can give for the continued repeating of the phrase and answer, as one ant touches another and passes on. The words which were clear at first are now lost in the general clamor which is suddenly stopped by the appearance of the Foreman with the head cutter, George.

FOREMAN: (center stage, calls for quiet) The Head wishes me to inform you: That it is quite true Spring will be late; that the whole factory has been held up on account of not being able to get



enough green to fill the orders for new leaves--  
there is, however, still enough material to keep  
the factory running for one day, and we hope-----

(Here the Little Robin enters again. Absolutely oblivious to the fact that he is interrupting the meeting he walks across the stage trying his voice: "Me-me-me-me-me-me-----")

FOREMAN: Do you realize you are interrupting a meeting?

ROBIN: (center stage unrolling his music): I beg your pardon,  
I am about to sing.

FOREMAN: (coming forward): But my dear sir, you cannot sing in the factory. Besides it isn't time for you to sing.

ROBIN: And why not, pray tell me? Am I not the first Robin, the harbinger of Spring? I and (waving his hand toward the entrance) the Mud.

(Two very sticky individuals are seen approaching arm in arm; in a rather inebriated fashion they announce:

1st MUD: We always stick together.

2nd MUD: The Mud and the Robin.

Together in chorus: "Always together,  
in all kinds of weather".

ROBIN: (correcting): Not all kinds of weather, only in the Spring.

THE MUD: Oh, all right, all right. (to each other)

(1st): Not all kinds of weather.

(2nd): Oh, no, not all kinds of weather. We just stick together.

(Both): We'll leave it at that.

ROBIN: (to Foreman) I don't think you quite understand. I am the first Robin. The Mud is here. Now I sing a song (unrolling his music) and the Spring comes in.



FOREMAN: But that's just the point. You must not sing now,  
Because Spring has just sent word she will not appear  
until there are more leaves ready. She is very  
particular.

ROBIN: But the Mud is here.

MUD: Oh, what difference does it make about us? We don't  
care. Anyway you want it. We(singing) just stick to-  
gether. In all kinds of weather.

ROBIN:(correctingly) Not all kinds of weather.

MUD: Oh, all right. All right.

1st: Not all kinds of weather.

2d: Oh, no not all kinds of weather.

(holding each other up and their clothes on. Mud is a very  
uncertain quantity. Their pants might come down at any minute;  
otherwise they are somewhat like Tweedle-Dum and Tweedle-Dee,  
and they are now leaning against one another holding each others'  
pants up from behind).

1st MUD: Don't go to crying. We're wet enough now.

2nd MUD: Well, don't go to crying yourself. What'll we do,  
stick around here or go out and get all over everything?

ROBIN: Not at all. You both stick with me.

MUD: Oh, all right. All right.

ROBIN:(to foreman): Will you kindly explain to me whose fault  
it is. It's time to sing. I know it. I feel just  
like singing.

MUD(irrepressable Mud): Go <sup>on,</sup> give 'em a song. He 's a great  
little singer. If we do say so.

ROBIN: Will you both be quiet, please.

MUD: Oh, all right, all right. No song. We're all wet.  
Nothing to cheer us up. (1st) Don't cry. (2d) Don't  
cry yourself. What do we care. No Spring. Just cut



Spring out and let Summer come in. It's all the same to us.

ROBIN: Will you be quiet while this gentleman explains? Now sir.

FOREMAN: I will show you. George, will you bring up the new patterns.

GEORGE: Right away, sir.

ROBIN: Patterns?

FOREMAN: Yes, patterns for the Spring leaves. We make the new leaves here. We follow the new styles very carefully. Ah, here they are-----

(four Ants enter in line, each carrying a stiff green pattern of a leaf, larger than themselves. The first carries an Oak, the second an Elm, the third a Willow and the fourth a Maple).

FOREMAN: You see these are the patterns for the leaves.

1st MUD: Ooooo!! Look at the Oak leaf. It's a bear cat.

2nd MUD: Keep still, or we'll be put out.

FOREMAN: Now the oak. There are not many changes made in the Oak pattern. Pretty steady demand for that design. The Oaks are staple in their idea, sir, don't go in for change of style. Wear the same thing all the time. Now with the Water Elm, it's different. (going to pattern).

1st MUD: Now we're going to learn something.

2nd:MUD: Yes. Something we can forget right away. (to each other)  
Yes. Right away. Right away. What do we care? (sing)  
Always together.

ROBIN: Will you please be still while the gentleman explains.

FOREMAN: Well, to continue. We have made the water elm lighter. No change in shape, you see, but just lighter. And



here we have the Willow. (getting out in front of it and considering the pattern) I think that pattern could be a little slimmer. Just a little. Don't you think? (to George) Just a little slimmer. Make a note of that, George.

GEORGE: (with book) Right sir.

FOREMAN: Let's see the maple. Hold the pattern a little more that way--thank you--now the maple. The pattern should be cut deeper to my way of thinking, you know they are wearing them shorter this year. (to George) I thought I spoke of that to you before, and you agreed with me-- did I not?

GEORGE: Yes, sir, shorter, I made them quite a bit shorter sir. But I didn't like to go too far. It wouldn't do to go too far sir, they might turn back the whole order.

FOREMAN: Hm--well, perhaps you are right. We can't afford to have any complaints. As it is we are behind in our orders now. And (to Robin) this is just the point I want to take up with you. The green from which these leaves are cut is being measured by Mr. Inchworm's son, Inchling---hush, here he comes now.

(Enter Inchling, left. He resembles to an extraordinary degree an Inchworm--he is crawling on a strip of green cloth, which extends from entrance two thirds of the way across the stage. He moves forward by putting out his hands and hunching himself up in the middle, by drawing his feet up to his hands. He is followed by a Wee ant carrying bucket and brush and a small golf-bag swung over his shoulder like a caddy, who announces in a loud voice "482" and marks the long green strip with a brush from the pot. Inchling then makes another spasm. The Wee ant marks again, "483". Another spasm, "484". Inchling stops to rest. The little Ant picks out a long yellow stick marked plainly ONE INCH and proceeds to measure the next to last spasm.

WEE ANT: It's an eighth of an inch out of the way.



(Inchling, standing up, walks back to the spot and looks at it)

INCHLING: Oh dear! It is always my fault. Now we will have to go back and do it over.

WEE ANT: But that ain't all. There was four other mistakes you made way back there.

INCHLING: But why didn't you tell me so I could have corrected them.

WEE ANT: Cause I thought we never would get done. Oh, my eye! I never saw such measuring. I've kept score for hundreds of Inchworms, and I never did see such measuring in my whole career---never.

INCHLING: (to foreman) I'm sorry sir, I know you will be wanting the green. We'll go back and correct it as fast as we can. (Exit Inchling and Wee Ant).

GEORGE: I never saw such a measurer sir.

FOREMAN: I'm afraid there must be something wrong. He is the only one of Mr. Inchworm's eight hundred sons who does not take to the business.

GEORGE: Think of the family crest, "Honesty and Accuracy".

FOREMAN: He's honest enough, but heaven's sakes, what accuracy! Did you ever see such measuring. He doesn't keep his mind on it. (to the Robin) Always wanting to fly.

ROBIN: (aghast) A worm that wants to fly!

THE MUD: What does he want to do that for?

(Gyem motive is heard. Gyem appears for a moment in the tree)

GYEM: I can tell you---tell you why--

(The Ants are all looking up to the spot and calling "Gyem, Gyem"---)



GYEM: (from another part of the stage)"Inchling always wants to fly." (he disappears)

ALL: Gyem!

FOREMAN: He's gone.

ALL: Gyem, tell us why.

(The woods are silent).

FOREMAN: He never stays. He just makes fun of us.

GEORGE: You know, sir, they say grown people can't see him, only little animals like us, or children----

FOREMAN: But I wish he wouldn't poke fun at us and stop all the work. Something has got to be done.

ROBIN: Do you want me to sing?

FOREMAN: (wildly) No, no singing till we have enough leaves for Spring to appear in. I'll send you word as soon as we are ready.

ROBIN: (starts to exit) Me-me-me-me----

MUD: Oh, all right, all right--no song. (singing on exit)  
We all stick together---in all sorts of weather.

ROBIN: (correcting) Not all sorts of weather.

MUD: No, not all sorts of weather. Oh, no, not all sorts of weather. Just foggy-rainy weather. (exit)

## SCENE II

FOREMAN: Now, to work all of you.

(He cranks on the machine and with George and the 2d Cutter they are at work. The other Ants are climbing up one side of the machine and down the other).

FOREMAN: (With the continued action)--"Now cut."

GEORGE: Hey, look alive, you nearly took my fingers last time.

2D CUTTER: (snapping) Why don't you get your fingers out of the way?



GEORGE: I do. You work too fast!

2D CUTTER: You can't work too fast for an ant. It can't be done.

GEORGE: Well, I want some fingers left. (taking up a new piece) Feel that. (they finger the green like tailors)

2d CUTTER: It's better green we are getting.

FOREMAN: Ah, and it cuts more easily.

GEORGE: It's better leaves we're making.

2D CUTTER: (holding up a new piece to be cut) Ready!

FOREMAN: Remember, it's an oak leaf, no scallops this time.

GEORGE: (sarcastically) Yes, remember it's an Oak leaf. Who sent down that order of maple leaves, to be hung on the oak tree? Had to get them off before dawn, with Gyem laughing in the branches until he fell?

FOREMAN: It was no fault of mine.

2ND CUTTER: It was Gyem who set us at the hanging.

GEORGE: I'll never forget it.

2ND CUTTER: I hope we have enough green to finish this order.

FOREMAN: I'll attend to that. (pulling a slip of birch bark and reading). For the Oaks, one thousand leaves of the best green, to be ready and hung on the branches tonight. (turning to the little packer with paint pot) Mark that for the Josselyn place. That bundle is ready; Willow, next.

GEORGE: So ho, the willow did come to us after all, decided to wait a day, but then he knew that we really were the best cutters. These willows are too easy to cut. Give me the hard ones, there's nothing like work to an ant.

2ND CUTTER: "Suppose the other animals worked the way we do?"

GEORGE:— They don't. They haven't got the system. It's only



on account of our industry that we hold our jobs.  
Think of it, every leaf that's cut out and hung on  
the trees comes from this factory.

FOREMAN: Get out of the way, all of you. This batch is done.  
Out with the leaves.

(Music. From the opening below the machine the leaves come tumbling out. Little green leaves ~~glad~~ in the sunshine--dancing about the stage from side to side, around and around and finally off to the packing department).

FOREMAN: To work. No more interruptions.

(Inchling appears as before with the Wee Ant, crawling and measuring).

WEE ANT: 495, 496.

(The factory whistle blows)

ALL: Five O'Clock! (they all rush off)

(The Wee Ant drops his brush as he is about to mark 497. As he walks away Inchling slowly rises.)

INCHLING: Aren't you going to mark that last inch?

WEE ANT: (at exit, disgustedly) What! On my own time!

### SCENE III

(Inchling alone picks up the yellow measure and marks "497".)

(Gyem Motive. Gyem appears on the hill)

GYEM: I know someone

Who can't fly

To his playmate in the sky.

INCHLING: (calls) Gyem!

GYEM: (in another place) Call her, call her

Try and fly

To your playmate in the sky.

INCHLING: (runs to place where Gyem has disappeared) Please, Gyem,  
tell me where I can find Golden Wings?



GYEM'S VOICE: (far off) In the sky,

In the sky---

INCHLING: If I could only fly.

(The butterfly <sup>motif</sup> song begins and as it is sung Inchling moves about the stage, now here, now there, peering through the leaves and into the sky above, at the same time raising and lowering his arms in a vain endeavor to fly).

(During the last verse Mr. Inchworm appears at the door of the acorn. He is a pompous old party, in a silk hat and large spectacles, and he leans on a cane as he walks. He watches his son in amazement).

INCHLING: Oh, if I could only fly to Golden Wings. (He turns and sees his father watching him)

MR. INCHWORM: (~~entering scene~~) Well, son, how goes it?

INCHLING: The order for the willows is almost finished.

(Mr. Inchworm inspects the work) Almost finished, see--four hundred and ninety-seven.

MR. INCHWORM: Ah! but you are clumsy. Must I ever show you thus and so? My son, have you no memory?

INCHLING: Father, I try hard, indeed I do.

MR. INCHWORM: I know you try hard, but (shaking his head) you never seem to learn. Always flitting about, no head, no head for business. What is this?

INCHLING: For the willow, see (refers to his list) green for five hundred new willow leaves.

MR. INCHWORM: (in a rage) Yes, and you've been all day about it. Now a good Inchworm would have measured that in an hour, and we are behind in our orders as it is.

(sits down and wipes his glasses)

INCHLING: (penitently) I know I'm very slow. It is the best I can do.

MR. INCHWORM: (Petulantly) I can't understand this sort of thing.



Your seven hundred and ninety-nine brothers all doing so well. There's never been anything like this in the family before. Why are you so slow?

INCHLING: (wearily) I don't know.

MR INCHWORM: Don't say, "I don't know".

INCHLING: Yes, father.

MR.INCHWORM: It's been this way ever since you were big enough to measure at all. Always an eighth, or a quarter of a sixteenth of an inch out of the way. Don't you realize what accuracy means to an Inchworm? What pride we take in it? Why it's the whole thing the family is measured by. (taking up stick) Now, watch me. (He measures rapidly) There! Five hundred! See how simple it is. All done. I can't understand what makes you so clumsy. (sitting down) Now try and remember to do as I tell you.

INCHLING: I will, father. May I go now?

MR.INCHWORM: Yes, yes, yes!

(Inchling is almost off the stage when Mrs. Bessie Inchworm, a pleasant round-faced woman, appears at the door of the acorn, calling after him.

MRS INCHWORM: Inchling, Inchling!

INCHLING: (turning around) Yes, mother.

MRS INCHWORM: Don't be late for your supper.

INCHLING: No, mother, I won't.

MRS INCHWORM: Remember the fireflies are coming tonight.

(exit Inchling)

#### SCENE IV

(Mrs. Inchworm joins her husband on the little rustic bench in the garden).

MR. INCHWORM: (irritated) Does he dream so that you have to



wake him up for his meals?

MRS INCHWORM: I don't think he's well, Laury.

MR. INCHWORM: He's well enough, but he simply won't work.

MRS INCHWORM: I think he tries hard.

MR. INCHWORM: Tries hard! Who ever heard of an Inchworm being a sixteenth of an inch out of the way!

MRS INCHWORM: He's different from the other seven hundred and ninety-nine.

MR. INCHWORM: Different! I should say he was. And now, look here, Bessie, where on earth did he get this idea of flying? (he jumps up and down waving his arms in an irritated manner as though he was flying).

MRS INCHWORM: I wish I could get that idea out of his head. I think he would be all right then.

MR. INCHWORM: He always did have that idea of flying. Flying! ! ! (same business of jumping up and down) Where did he get it? Inchworms don't fly!

MRS INCHWORM: Now, Laury, be calm about the thing. He's got the idea and we can't help it. He'll get over it. You know your uncle was a little flighty himself.

MR. INCHWORM: (still irritated) Flighty! But it never interfered with his measuring, or his accuracy when it came to business. And look at the rest of the boys. (getting up and walking about pumping his arms) Think of it, flying!

#### SCENE V

(At this point, Lady Bug enters. If you ever met any lady who could talk, Lady Bug simply goes her one better. Her flow of conversation is continuous and difficult to shut off).

LADY BUG: My goodness gracious, leaves and stalks! Whatever



are you doing with yourself, Mr. Inchworm?

MR. INCH: (very dignified) Good Evening, Lady Bug. (He politely places a chair).

LADY BUG: (continuing) Good evening (to Mrs. Inchworm) Bessie, my dear, I never can make out all the queer motions other bugs have. They're always going around doing something strange. Always biting one in an unexpected place, or crawling into my garden, just as I get it all cleaned up. I found a caterpillar asleep on my door-step this morning. He had taken off all his shoes. My dear, shoes all over the place. I can't, for the life of me, understand how anybody can want more than six feet.

MR. INCH: (in an effort to escape from the flood) I think, my dear, I'd better go in and get things ready.

LADY BUG: (detaining him) Now, Mr. Inchworm, you stay right where you are. I'm going to have a nice little visit with you and-----

MRS. INCH: You see, Lady Bug, we are giving a dance tonight.

Won't you come in, it's for the fire-flies.

LADY BUG: (aghast) Fire-Flies, fire-flies! Me, come? To a ball with them fire-flies? As if we widows ain't had enough to stand for (weeping into a large bandana handkerchief). Can we ever forget the big fire when every single one of our husbands were burned? Every gentlemen bug! (sobbing) And there ain't been anything but Lady Bugs since! (sobbing).

MRS INCH: (comforting her) Oh, I'm so sorry, Lady Bug. I do hope I haven't offended you. I wouldn't hurt your



feelings for anything.

LADY BUG: (mollified, wiping her eyes) Bessie, dear, do you know one of them Fireflies has been buzzing around my home for the last two weeks. I won't have him in my house, I'm that afraid of fire, I am. (simpling) But Bessie, he is a very handsome gentleman, if I do say it, but every time he flashes up it gives me such a turn.

MRS INCH: Really, Lady Bug, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings.

LADY BUG: Bless, you Bessie, I know you didn't. It's just because we widows is so foolish. Ever since my poor, dear husband got burned up, why, I am that scared I look every time I cross a leaf. I don't trust myself out longer than to get food. Why you know-----

MR. INCH: (interrupting, deliberately trying to stop the flow of words) Very pleasant evening we are having!

LADY BUG: (indignantly drawing herself up) As I was saying, I am scared of fires--why I can't get any agent to insure in our house, they won't give Lady Bugs insurance any more--it's awful, it's awful.

(LOUD VOICE OFF STAGE)

"Lady-bug, Lady-bug,  
Fly away home,  
Your house is on fire  
And your children will burn".

(Lady Bug rushes wildly about the stage).



LADY BUG: It ain't possible, all the children at home and everything, and everything.

MRS INCH: (wringing her hands) Oh, Lady Bug, Lady Bug.

(The rattling and clanging of bells is heard approaching ~~And the red fire is seen in the distance~~  
MR. INCH: I hear the engines coming.

LADY BUG: (rushing wildly to left of stage) My children, my children!

(Water Bugs appear at a dead run with hose carriage and a crowd of insects and other little animals follow, shouting. They pass Mr. Inchworm who rushes over to the exit, jumping up and down, shouting).

MR. INCH: This way, this way!

(The Water Bugs with axes, ladders, hose, tear madly twice around the stage before they get the direction from Mr. Inchworm. **EXIT ALL** in a great tumult. The stage is left empty for a moment as the cries die away in the distance.

#### SCENE VI

(The last rays of the sun to penetrate the forest are dying away on the side of the acorn cottage. (The Butterfly motive is heard)

(Golden Wings enters slowly; she goes over on tip-toe to the house calling.)

GOLDEN WINGS: Inchling, Inchling, Inchling, where are you? (she looks in the window and about the garden)

(Gyem motive is heard and Gyem appears in spot-light)

GYEM: (mocking) I can tell you--

Tell you---

(The spot light about him begins to fade and he changes slowly as he looks closely at the pathetic little butterfly who stands watching him in silence).

GOLDEN WINGS: Don't tease me, Mr. Gyem, please. I want to find Inchling.

GYEM: (ruefully, looking himself all over for the lost light)

Tease you! I can't tease you. Look it's all gone!

GOLDEN WINGS: What's all gone?



GYEM: The light. Didn't you see it all around me when  
I came in?

GOLDEN WINGS: Why, yes, I saw it.

GYEM: Now, look, it's all gone. Every bit of it. And  
that means, well, it means you are in love

GOLDEN WINGS: Why, who told you that?

GYEM: I don't have to be told. You see I don't belong  
to anybody and I can make fun of everything, but  
there are two things that I can't laugh at.

GOLDEN WINGS: (singing) And what are these wonderful things, Mr. Gyem?

GYEM: (singing) Beauty and Love, Butterfly.

GYEM AND GOLDEN WINGS DUET:

When you're in love  
The World goes round.  
When you fall out  
If you haven't found  
Just what it is  
That makes it go  
These are the things you ought to know.

GOLDEN WINGS: And what are these wonderful things, Mr. Gyem?

GYEM: Beauty and Love, Butterfly.

GOLDEN WINGS: Why, beauty and love are everywhere.

GYEM: Beauty and Love are very rare.

GOLDEN WINGS: How can you say such things, Mr. Gyem?

GYEM: I'm not in love, Butterfly.

BOTH: Beauty and love

Beauty and love

Beauty and love

Are mine.



GYEM: For I, who have wandered  
Far and wide,  
From mountain top  
To sinking tide,  
Always looking  
I sometimes find  
The things to which the world is blind.

GOLDEN WINGS: And what are these wonderful things, Mr. Gyem?

GYEM: Beauty and Love, Butterfly.

GOLDEN WINGS: Why, beauty and love are everywhere!

GYEM: Beauty and love are very rare.

GOLDEN WINGS: How can you say such things, Mr. Gyem?

GYEM: I'm not in love, Butterfly,-----Etc.

GOLDEN WINGS: But what has all this to do with me, Mr. Gyem?

GYEM: Butterfly, if you must know,  
All your love has made me go  
Hunting for your Inchling.

(White spot again on Gyem, who dances off, laughing in the light).

#### SCENE VII

(Golden Wings alone, awaits Inchling).

(Suddenly the terrible humming of a gigantic Mosquito is heard off stage and Golden Wings rushes behind the house in fright as Mosquito enters.

The part is played by a grown person, and he has gotten himself up to look like a most dreadful kind of a Mosquito, with blood all over him. He is followed by four little Mosquitos who hum in chorus on combs, and a fifth with a small grindstone).

MOSQUITO: (Stealthily) Ha, ha, we will attack the house.

(To the low humming of the music they march stealthily about the stage raising their feet very high and stepping with great caution, stopping every now and then with a warning "HIST". Finally the little mosquitos arrange themselves in a line, and after several false starts, begin to hum the song of battle).







## II

MOSQUITO: We drag the children, screaming through the nets

CHORUS: Through the nets

MOSQUITO: The ugly ones we always keep as pets.

CHORUS: Keep as pets!

MOSQUITO: And we always eat them raw

And we're always wanting more

Through the nets, through the nets, through the nets.

(He stalks boldly up to the house and begins to sing very terribly, when he comes upon Golden Wings, turning to the band he whispers).

MOSQUITO: Ha, ha, prisoners! (his manner changes and he becomes cunning and ingratiating. Gold Wings watches him with fear).

MOSQUITO: (in as sweet tones as the Wolf in "Red Riding Hood")  
Good evening, my dear.

GOLDEN WINGS: Good evening sir.

MOSQUITO: (buzzing) How pretty and fresh you look this evening. You mustn't be afraid of me, my dear, I'm  
A real Knight of the order of <sup>London</sup> ~~Surban~~ Knights. I  
have vast estates in the mountains, where I spend  
my summers. Then I have a city house in a big City,  
(approaching Golden Wings, who draws back in fear)  
Won't you come and see my house, my dear?

GOLDEN WINGS: But please, sir, I don't want to.

MOSQUITO: There is a room all full of chocolate candy, another  
room all full of cake, and you can have all you can  
eat. With white rabbits to play with and dollies  
that open their eyes and talk.

GOLDEN WINGS: I'm afraid that I can't come, sir.

(Mosquito draws closer).

MOSQUITO: Please come, little girl. The dollies all need you,  
and I'll fly with you all the way, with you on my



back. (Approaching her he tries to take hold of her hand) Come, come, my dear, you will be very happy with me.

GOLDEN WINGS: (jumps back and stamps her foot, crying) I hate you, I hate you!

# SCENE VIII

(At this moment a deep rough voice is heard drawing near, singing)

There were sixteen bugs in a bottle of rum,

Yo-Ho, my boys, you-ho,

When we set sail for Kingdom come,

Yo-ho, my hearties, ho,

And we nails our flag to the mizzen mast".

(The voice reaches the entrance on an especially low, deep note, a very small fire-fly, disguised as a sailor bug, <sup>carrying a pail</sup> hops on the stage. He catches sight of Golden Wings and the Mosquito).

FIRE FLY: (cooly) Madam, is this large, ugly man annoying you?

MOSQUITO: (in screaming rage advances) Z-u-m-m-m-m-m--. You poor little sailor, I'll poke you full of holes, I'll drill you through and through, and then I'll use you as a spy glass to find other little sailors. How dare you insult me? I am the great Surburban Knight! Where I roam none dare stay out of doors; I drive them before me from the fields, from the woods, back into their houses ~~with~~ which they barricade against me. For once I reach them, it is a fight unto the death.

FIRE FLY: (casually) Dear me. It's hard to believe. All of it at once I mean--you shouldn't tell it all at once you know.



GOLDEN WINGS: Oh, save yourself, sailor, save yourself, I pray.

FIRE FLY: Madam, do not worry.

MOSQUITO: (sarcastically) No, madam, do not worry. I have eaten a lot of little sailors. (to the sailor) Are you sure you are fresh? (Fire Fly simply looks at Mosquito) Because I ate a sailor once that wasn't fresh, and I got sick. Dr. Beetle called it, let me see, yes, Mosquitomaine poisoning--very disagreeable.

FIRE FLY: Oh you must have been very sick.

MOSQUITO: Now I only kill sailors and throw them aside, and your turn has come, now sailor, I shall kill you.

FIRE FLY: (turning on the advancing Mosquito) One step forward and I'll burn your wings and leave your ashes on the ground. (He begins rapidly to flash an electric light in his chest) Away all of you!

MOSQUITO: (retreating before the advancing Fire Fly) Foiled, foiled again. (To Golden Wings) My time will come, I'll get you when you sleep.

(Exit Mosquito, followed by the five little mosquitos).

#### SCENE IX

GOLDEN WINGS: (turns to Fire Fly) Oh, thank you, thank you for saving me!

FIRE FLY: (dusting off his shoes with his handkerchief and picking a thread from off his coat) Don't mention it. ---Er--how do you think I look?

GOLDEN WINGS: I shouldn't have known you in your disguise.

FIRE FLY: (pleased) Really? Ha, hat! That's fine. Really



you wouldn't have known me? Hay, fine, fine.

GOLDEN WINGS: But, why are you, a fire fly, disguised as a sailor?

FIRE FLY: You really think my disguise is good?

GOLDEN WINGS: Until I saw you flash, I thought, of course, it was one of those Water Bugs!

FIRE FLY: That's fine! That's fine! Er--, do you think the pail helps? It's full of water you know.

GOLDEN WINGS: Very much.

FIRE FLY: That was another idea of mine. Anything to get the idea of fire out of one's head.

GOLDEN WINGS: Yes, but why? Why do you want to be taken for a Water Bug, when you are really a Fire Fly?

FIRE FLY: (looking around enigmatically) The Lady Bug!

GOLDEN WINGS: The Lady Bug?

FIRE FLY: (nodding his head violently) I'm in love with her, but she's afraid of fire. Won't have nothing to do with me. So I goes and disguises myself. See, Water Bugs put out fires.

GOLDEN WINGS: (laughing) Oh, I see, and she lets you come and see her now?

FIRE FLY: (nodding violently) Don't understand, see. Lets me walk right in. Thinks I'm fine. But (seriously) she won't play with a Fire Fly, she says that flat. So I dresses this way and I tries to control my flashes the best way I can, and she ain't found out yet.

GOLDEN WINGS: You must be very fond of her to take all this trouble. It is just the way I enjoy playing with Inchling.



FFF: Yes, but I have a terrible time with my flashes. You see as soon as I see her I lose control of myself and have to sit with my back to her most of the time.

G W: It must be very hard on you.

F F: It is, but I am doing the best I can. You can't do more, can you, now?

G W: That's just the way Inchling is. He's doing the best he can and I'm sorry for him. He don't seem to get along at all. I was waiting for him when that awful Mosquito came and tried to carry me off.

F F: Well, I'll stay by you, Golden Wings, 'Till he comes. I won't leave you with that Surburban Knight wandering around the woods. He carries children off, he does. But (swelling up) He's afraid of fire, he is. (a noise is heard. The Fire Fly jumps and begins to flash violently. Golden Wings crouches behind him. They wait in sildent. -- Inchling enters)

G W: Oh, Inchling, where have you been? (running to him) I've been waiting so long for you.

INCHLING: Oh, Golden Wings, Golden Wings. (he takes her hand and looks at the Fire Fly).

G W: Inchling, this is the Fire Fly. He has just saved me from the Terrible Mosquito.

INCHLING: Glad to meet you, sir.

F F: (bashfully) Don't mention it. Don't mention it.

INCHLING: I thank you sir.

F F: (backing off) Nothing at all. Really! (He begins dusting off his shoes again to hide his embarrassment) Really I must go, you know.

G W: To Lady Bug?



(at which the Fire Fly gives one prolonged flash and leaves in a series of short ones).

## SCENE X

G W: Do you know, Inchling, the Fire Fly has disguised himself so that he can play with the Lady Bug. What do you think of that?

INCHLING: I have thought of something like that for a long time, and I have tried to find a way out. Listen, Golden Wings, we must face it. You are a Butterfly and you may fly where you please, among the trees, to bird nests and out, out into the sun, but I am only a worm. I can never fly and never can play your games. We must part; I will go away forever.

G W: But, where will you go, Inchling?

INCHLING: I do not know, but if there is a way to fly, I will find it.

G W: You mean we can't play together any more, Inchling?

INCHLING: I've tried so hard to fly without wings, and I can't even leave the ground a little bit. If I only knew where to find them I would do anything, go anywhere.

G W: Oh, Inchling, perhaps if you asked all the bugs that fly, one of them might be able to tell you, then you could get them and it would be all right.

INCHLING: Golden Wings, if there is a way to fly I will find it. I will even go to the Terrible Mosquito!

G W: Aren't you afraid of him, Inchling?

INCHLING: I'm not afraid of anything. The only thing I fear is that I can never fly. Everybody says I can't. But I want to so badly. Don't you think I will find them somewhere?



G W: If you will try, Inchling, and look everywhere, I'm sure you will find them some place.

INCHLING: And will you wait for me, Golden Wings?

G W: I will wait for you, because I know you will find them.

INCHLING: Goodbye-----Golden Wings!

G W: (sobbing) Goodbye.

(Inchling walks slowly, until he reaches the other side of the stage. He then turns and stands looking at Golden Wings).

INCHLING: (bravely) I will come back to you, as soon as I find my wings. (Exit Inchling and Golden Wings goes back and sits down as her wings droop slowly)

G W: (calling) Inchling! Inchling!

( The scene fades out)

(Gyem Motive is heard) and the lights are turned on)

GYEM: Night is here

Fire Fly dear

Bring a light (He points with his wand and a Fire Fly appears bearing a little lantern)

Bring a light

For the dance!

(The Fire Flies appear now here, now there. Their little lanterns glow and move to and fro, dancing softly in clusters, or darting rapidly in a swinging circle about the stage, to the music of the soft June night.)



## ACT II

## (Scene 1)

The encampment of the Terrible Mosquito

The stage is dark. On ~~the right~~ <sup>the night</sup> a number of tall, thin, peaked tents, fantastically pointing their spikes toward the stars. ~~A~~ <sup>A</sup> single lilac spot covers the ground in front of the nearest tents. ~~In~~ <sup>In</sup> a silhouette of the form of a sentry is seen pacing back and forth along the front of the stage. Suddenly the humming of many wings is heard.

SENTRY: Who goes there?

VOICE FROM ABOVE: Friend.

SENTRY: Give the countersign.

VOICE: Blood!

(Terrible Mosquito enters with his followers).

TERRIBLE MOSQUITO: I tell you, I will get her yet. I will bring her to the castle and we will eat HER (cheers from his followers). Drink her blood--drop by drop (more cheers). They think they can protect themselves because they are using nets against us (groans). Nets against us! I will show them there is not <sup>a</sup> net that I cannot find my way through. (cheers) And now, my trusty men, away, get your sleep. Tighten your belts for we have work before this night. (To Sentry) When the moon goes behind the clouds, call me, and we will rise a million strong and on the wing make our way back against the nets. (He enters the encampment and is lost to sight).

1st. SOLDIER: I'm still hungry.

2nd. SOLDIER: Not a drop of blood today.

(They begin to lay aside their accoutrements and sit in groups about the stage).

SENTRY: No luck?



(Groans follow his question. He goes humming back and forth. One of the soldiers limps over to him).

SENTRY: What's the matter with the chief?

2nd SOLDIER: Stung!

SENTRY: What happened?

2nd SOLDIER: (Removing his boots and looking at his foot) Tried to carry off a butterfly, and a sailor came along with fire and drove us off.

SENTRY: Is that all?

1st SOLDIER: He seemed to have some personal desire to get her. All other attractions were lost. They used nets against us.

SENTRY: Hungry?

2nd SOLDIER: I could eat my boots, The men are getting wild. They will attack anywhere.

SENTRY: I pity the poor people who get caught tonight.

2nd SOLDIER: I wish I could get a nice pair of ankles to feed on. I'd eat until I was full.

SENTRY: That's just the trouble. Once you taste blood you have no control.

2nd SOLDIER: Just let me taste it once.

SENTRY: What poison did you use at dawn?

1st SOLDIER: (looking at a can hung at his side) Mal-Aria. Same old stuff. (He opens can and sticks end of his bill in). They say they got some cure for it now. I kin remember when they shook to death after we struck.

SENTRY: Times have changed. We'll have to get something stronger.

1st SOLDIER: It's getting harder every day--they're using Kerosene against us now--wiping out whole encampments at a time.



It's well we're hidden here among the swamps.

SENTRY: One drop of Kerosene and we're done for.

## SCENE II

(Enter Robin and the Mud. The Robin's throat is tied up in a huge white flannel cloth with a bow in the back; he carries a cane.)

SENTRY: Who goes there?

THE MUD: O-o-o-o-o-u, Somebody's spying.

SENTRY: Who goes, I say.

THE MUD: O-o-o-o-o-u, just a couple of other fellows, (singing)

Always together, in all kinds of weather.

(The Robin here hops up and pounds in an animated manner with his cane)

THE MUD: Oh, all right--all right--(1st) Not all kinds of weather.

(2nd) Oh, no not all kinds of weather, just always together.

SENTRY: Give the countersign.

THE MUD: Mud.

SENTRY: That's not the word.

THE MUD: Oh, all right! All right! (together) That's not the word--

(1st) A lot you know about mud. Why we was in the trenches all through the war. (2nd) On both sides (Both) What difference did it make? (singing) Always together.

(They stop abruptly, bowing to the Robin) You see we stopped in time.

SENTRY: Who is your friend.

THE MUD: He's the first Robin. He sings and then Spring comes in. You see it is this way. (2nd) Spring was late and he caught cold waiting. In all kinds of weather. (Robin



laps with cane) (1st) I know, not all kinds of weather--he just caught cold and now he can't sing a note--and Spring has got to wait 'till he can. (2nd) So we're not so popular around here. (both) But what do we care? What do we care? We always come out in the wash.

SENTRY: You clear out of here or I'll call the guard.  
 THE MUD: O-o-o-o-o-u. Ain't he personal. (2nd) Let him call the guard (Both) We love a parade.  
 SENTRY: If you think I'm going to wake up those men just for you, you are mistaken.  
 VOICE OF CHIEF: Sentry, what's all that noise about.  
 SENTRY: It's 1st Robin and The Mud, sir.  
 VOICE OF CHIEF: That's fine. Spring has come (terrible voice) More blood! More blood!  
 SENTRY: You had better leave before he comes out.  
 THE MUD: Oh we ain't popular round here either. Ain't it awful? What do we care? What do we care? (to Robin) Come on, Bobby, let's get out before they put us out.  
 SENTRY: (to 2nd Soldier) Show 'em out.  
 2nd SOLDIER: Now then, this way.  
 THE MUD: Oh! All right, all right--Always together.

(Exit Robin, Mud and soldier).

### SCENE III

1st SOLDIER: It's a long night. No food!  
 SENTRY: I've got to stand both watches tonight. There's no relief. (2nd Soldier returns)



2d SOLDIER: That's that.

1st SOLDIER: Which way did they go.

2nd SOLDIER: Looking for Spring.

(Enter Inchling, passing wearily on his way in search of wings)

SENTRY: Halt! Who goes there?

INCHLING: A friend.

2nd SOLDIER: Kill him. We got too many friends around here.

SENTRY: Stop! Wait until we find out what he wants.

2nd SOLDIER: No, kill him now and ask him afterwards.

SENTRY: What do you want?

INCHLING: I am looking for wings.

SENTRY: Looking for wings. (He begins to laugh) He's looking for wings, can yiu beat that? Say do you know where you are? This is the encampment of the Terrible Mosquito -no one ever leaves here alive.

2nd SOLDIER: If you were fit to eat I'd have you by this time.

SENTRY: He isn't worth drawing my bill for.

INCHLING: Where did you get your wings?

SENTRY: Oh my poison! He's asking me where I got my wings!

1st SOLDIER: Tell him, Bill.

SENTRY: Well you see--Oh, my wings and stinger, but you are a silly one! Come looking for wings!

INCHLING: I have hunted everywhere for someone to tell me, someone to guide me to some place where I might find the wings, so that I might fly.

2nd SOLDIER: If you ain't got them to start with, you'll go on hunting a long while yet, before you'll find them.

SENTRY: You haven't looked under the bed, have you?



2nd SOLDIER: Or he might find them in his hat!

INCHLING: It's always the same everywhere. Unless you have them, you can't find them.

SENTRY: And how far have you traveled, looking for them?

INCHLING: In many lands. Among all bugs. I have traveled far, to the very limits of the forest.

SENTRY: And you dare to come to this encampment?

INCHLING: I dare anything, only my strength is almost gone!

SENTRY: (to 2d Sol.) Let him go, he's going to die anyway.

INCHLING: Then you can't tell me? This is the last place I have left to look.

2nd SOLDIER: Out with you, off, see.

(Exit Inchling)

#### SCENE IV

SENTRY: Can you beat that? Come looking for wings. Say, some of these animals is sure bugs!

1st SOLDIER: I'll say they are. (Looking at the sky) Looks like the moon was going under.

SENTRY: Looks that way.

1st SOLDIER: Better give the signal. I'll tell you they're a hungry tonight. (Sentry places a bugle to his lips, it gives a strange harsh sound. The Soldiers awaken and begin to buckle on their bills. The moon begins to disappear and the stage is lost in darkness. The Terrible Mosquito appears)

TERRIBLE MOSQUITO: Are the men ready? (The soldiers gather) My men, tonight we will make a killing. I have the plans and know the entrance by the broken screen. I'll lead the way and give the signal when the coast is clear. (Cheers and threats now fill the



the air).

Steer to the east,

A mile away

Over the marsh

To our waiting prey.

Ready'. We're off and away.

(In the darkness comes the hum as though millions of little machines were rising. Stage grows dark---the tents are removed and we have the acorn house in moonlight.

#### SCENE V

(The Fire Fly enters and leans against a tall blade of grass. Every now and then a long white flash comes from his stomach, followed by a groan from him)

FIRE FLY: (Finally in despair after one prolonged glow) There it goes again. I can't learn to control it. Dr. Beetle said if I drank water and held my breath it would stop them. (He searches for his pail and takes a drink and holds his breath; after a time he speaks) There now, they have stopped. (He sits down quietly. A slow prolonged glow gradually lights up his stomach) OH, what's the use. I can't. She's sure to find me out and then it will be all over between us. (dejected pause) For she won't play with Fire Flies, she says that flat, and I know she means what she says. (voice of Lady Bug is heard in the acorn house, taking her leave)

LADY BUG: No, no Mr. Inchworm, I will not have you see me home, it is such a short way over to the daisy. And if I felt that I was going to disturb you every time I ran over here in the evenings, I wouldn't feel comfortable



about it, I wouldn't. Good night, Bessie, my dear.

Good night, Mr. Inchworm.

MRS INCHWORM'S VOICE: Good night, Lady Bug.

LADY BUG: (comes out of door and looks about, turns and calls back) My dear, such a beautiful night and not a Fire fly around.

(The Fire Fly, who has jumped up in his excitement, stands rigidly facing the audience, and with his back to the Lady Bug, now begins to flash wildly, utterly unable to control himself at the sound of her voice. Lady Bug catches sight of the rigid back of the Fire Fly).

LADY BUG: (provokingly) How long have you been here, pray?

FIRE FLY: (without turning around) Every since you went in to call.

LADY BUG: (gently) Did you follow me here?

FIRE FLY: (nervously) Yes, I thought you might let me take you home.

LADY BUG: Well, don't you think we had better be starting?

FIRE FLY: (more nervously) Yes, yes, in a moment please. (he takes a drink of water and tries to hold his breath at the same time. Breath, water and all come spouting out on the stage).

LADY BUG: (in surprise) What are you doing now?

FIRE FLY: (sheepishly) I was just taking a drink of water.

LADY BUG: Well, you needn't make a watering pot out of yourself.

(She approaches the Fire Fly, who madly grasps his hat from his head and covers the light in his stomach).

LADY BUG: What are you doing with your hat?

FIRE FLY: (gasping) Such a pain. I think it's the stomach-ache again!

LADY BUG: You poor dear. You come right over to my house. I've got some Jamaica Ginger left. But heavens knows, you've drunk five bottles of it already. You ought to have somebody to take care of you.



FIRE FLY: (Still with his back turned) Oh, Lady Bug, if you knew how I felt!

LADY BUG: (sympathetically) Is it as bad as that?

FIRE FLY: (desperately) I mean, toward you.

LADY BUG: (aghast, looking at his back) You mean you've got it in your back too?

FIRE FLY: Oh dear, oh dear, no.

LADY BUG: Well, if it's just a stomach ache we can fix that. Come along with me.

FIRE FLY: (bending over to hide the light) It's an awful position I'm in.

LADY BUG: Well, why don't you stand up straight then?

FIRE FLY: I can't.

LADY BUG: Oh, dear, it must be very bad, and to think you caught it sitting out here in the wet grass waiting for me. You are a real gentleman bug.

FIRE FLY: It makes me so happy to hear you say that.

LADY BUG: (coquettishly) To think of my making you happy when you feel like that.

FIRE FLY: It makes me feel warm all over, just like Jamaica Ginger.

LADY BUG: ~~Then~~, why don't you stand up?

FIRE FLY: I'm too happy.

LADY BUG: (taking his arm) You come right along with me. There's no hint like Jamaica Ginger for stomachache.

FIRE FLY: (desperately) Wait until I get my pail.

LADY BUG: (leading the way off) You are so thoughtful, and me so scared of fire.

FIRE FLY: (at front of stage to audience) I'm that full of Jamaica Ginger that me clothes is most burnt off me back.



VOICE OF LADY BUG: Aren't you coming?

FIRE FLY: Oh, she will find out, she will find out. (taking his pail and with his hat arranged over his stomach he follows).

SCENE VI

(Silence falls upon the scene. A bat flits across the stage. The door of the acorn opens and Mr. Inchworm stands with a lighted candle in his hand. He is dressed in his night gown and cap. He peers around and addresses Bessie, who is inside).

MR. INCHWORM: Bats, my dear, bats. They're out tonight.

MRS INCHWORM: (coming out in a nightcap and kimono) Oh, dear, do you think Inchling will ever come back.

MR INCHWORM: I can't tell.

MRS INCHWORM: It's such a long time, he must be grown up by now.

I hope he hasn't changed so we won't know him.

MR. INCHWORM: If he will only get that foolish idea out of his head about flying. That's all I want. The world generally knocks those ideas out of one's head.

MRS INCHWORM: Oh, it's such a terrible place, and to think of him away in a strange country.

MR. INCHWORM: Well, I hope he don't try and get a job measuring anything. He'll disgrace the family.

MRS INCHWORM: That's just it. What can he do? I wish he'd never seen that little Butterfly, or anybody with wings.

MR. INCHWORM: My dear, you can't help seeing them. Bats have 'em, flies have 'em, gnats have 'em. Lots of bugs have wings. Itain't the seeing 'em that hurts bugs without 'em, it's the wanting 'em.

MRS INCHWORM: It's new ideasthat make people suffer so.

MR. INCHWORM: It's not having sensible ideas. Now I knew what I



wanted. I wanted to measure, and I've measured all my life. But this idea of flying, that isn't sensible .It's against nature.

MRS INCHWORM: Well, maybe there are some things that are more than nature. Only I don't care, I wish Inchling were home.  
(Mr. Inchworm turns to follow Mrs. Inchworm into the house).

# SCENE VII

(The Mosquito band enters stealthily)

TERRIBLE MOSQUITO: (in a whisper) This is the place. This is the spot where she escaped me. Take heart, my famished men. We are approaching the end of our hardships.  
(to the sentry) Should we begin singing?

SENTRY: Why do you want to sing?

T MOSQUITO: You do not understand? It is our custom to sing at least three songs before we attack .

SENTRY: But she may not be here.

T MOSQUITO: It makes no difference, only if we sing now we will be ready to attack as soon as <sup>she</sup> she arrives. You understand my strategy?

SENTRY: Yes, but you must keep the men quiet now. I want to look around just a moment. (he goes on tiptoe over to the window of the acorn house and peeps in). (Returning) As I thought, the report is true. Inchling has been lost. That will simplify our work. Inchling lost and your way is clear.

T MOSQUITO: Lead on! This is no time for song. It is Golden Wings I want and blood. Do you hear, blood for me, men.

(exeunt all).



## SCENE VIII

(Enter Foreman, George and 2nd Cutter. They follow one another and at first rush rapidly about the stage. Finally they turn and face each other. They talk quickly in short clipped words).

FOREMAN: I can't stand being idle.

2d CUTTER: We are just wasting our lives.

FOREMAN: I tell, you, Inchling will never come back.

GEORGE: Do you think he is dead?

2d CUTTER: If we don't do something, we'll die too. Nobody can live without working.

FOREMAN: (in terror) What do you mean?

2d CUTTER: We talk, we don't work--that's what we do.

GEORGE: Talk is a dreadful waste of time.

FOREMAN: It is very insidious (to get this big word out, it requires his making two or three quick jumps sidewise)

GEORGE: You are right.

(The three ants immediately rush about the stage, leaving each other and investigating everything they come in contact with, very much like ants indeed. Finally they get together)

2d CUTTER: We are the best cutting <sup>a</sup>team in the business, and no one to measure for us. <sup>A</sup>Let us think (same business of rushing about). Can't we start something? Oh, let us think more (same business of investigating).

FOREMAN: (in <sup>e</sup>dispair) No, we were just trained to cut leaves, that's all. (More violent rushing around stage).

2d CUTTER: (finally) I have it. (points to huge daisy) Has to have new frocks, doesn't she? All flowers do--why don't we cut out yellow smocks for the peppies? We could do that.

FOREMAN: We might try.

GEORGE: But where are we to get the goods?



2d CUTTER: I got an idea. I know where we can get some yellow cloth,  
and we'll go down and cut a lot of smocks for the poppies.

(they all begin again to rush about the stage in excitement,  
calling to one another).

FOREMAN: And I'll take 'em around and get orders.

GEORGE: And I'll go down and get the patterns.

2d CUTTER: (excited) We got the scissors and everything!

ALL: Hurray for the poppy smocks!

FOREMAN: It's an ill wind that blows nobody good. Inchling is gone,  
but it's a lucky thing for us. He didn't know how to  
measure, he only kept us the best cutters, back. And now,  
look, we are going to get the poppy business!

2d CUTTER: Come on and stop talking. (They all rush off).

# SCENE IX

(Inchling Motive)

1-----Inchling returns to die.

(Enter Inchling, bedraggled and travel stained, with his little pack  
on a stick. He drags himself to the entrance right of the stage and  
sinks wearily down).

INCHLING: To have looked everywhere, to have tried so long, so bitterly  
to find my wings and to have come back at last without them.  
I cannot return, I cannot see Golden Wings again. She will  
not want me, and the rest will only laugh at me and tell me  
they cannot be found. (He slips back weary until he lies  
broken in the moonlight).

2-----The music changes softly. For a moment the huge Butterfly  
is seen fluttering on the hill in the rear, and fades away.

3-----Inchling is alone. The Bat Motive is heard and the bats  
begin to appear stealthily. Suddenly they dart forward,  
slapping themselves against various parts of the scenery.  
They remain motionless. The leader catches sight of Inchling  
and makes a sign to the others who approach slowly. Suddenly  
they cling together. The leader draws them with a sign to-  
ward their prey. About Inchling they perform a fantastic



dance of Night and are about to descend upon his little body when---

4-----The White figure of Gyem appears on the hill and stamps his foot. The Bats scatter and Gyem walks slowly over to the prostrate form of Inchling, and lifting his head he speaks with elf-like cunning.

GYEM: Wood God, I who fly between  
The Mortals and the things unseen,  
Aid me with your magic wand,  
Bring me wings for Inchling.

5-----The voice of the Wood God is heard.

WOOD GOD: Gyem-of-the-woods, with thy laughter,  
Call not on me for my magic,  
I am the God of the Forest  
Go thou, to Nature, thy Mother  
Whose secrets are hidden forever.

6-----Slowly, to the deep strains of the music, the great cocoon begins to descend.

7-----The Butterfly song is heard, and for a moment the huge Butterfly is seen hovering in the background.

8-----Gyem, who is watching, sweeps his wand toward the bats who come forward, while he lifts Inchling and gently leads him into the great cocoon, foling him within it's ragged shrouds.

9-----Again the huge butterfly appears for a moment. The cocoon begins to ascend. The bats spring and claw at it as it rises. When it reaches it's place in the tree the music stops.

GYEM: Sleep, Inchling, sleep,  
High in the tree.  
I know not what fate  
The Gods hold for thee.

10-----Gyem (turning sharply onthe bats).

Dance then on your twinkling feet,  
'Ere you sup on blood and meat,  
And let everybne be gone  
By the coming of the dawn.

The Bat music begins---more bats arrive--and a wild fantastic dance begins in which Gyem is drawn.

11-----Suddenly a light appears flowing on the great cocoon above them and in terror, as though something supernatural was taking place, the bats retreat, followed slowly by Gyem in silent wonder.



ACT III  
(Scene 1)

Played on top of a daisy.

(The huge yellow center of a daisy is placed on the knoll, the white petals curling outward, long white paths leading down to the foot-lights. Between two of them in the forestage is a morning glory rising on a long stalk. This is used as one of the entrances. It is early morning and the dew drop dancers hang upon the petals.

(Lady Bug opens the door in the center of the daisy and appears with a broom made of brown twigs. She looks at the dew drops caught in the web).

LADY BUG: (Singing)

A cobweb in the morning  
Caught a drop of dew,  
Tell me, little dew-drop,  
What becomes of you?

LITTLE DEW DROP:  
(Answers her)

I, a little dew drop,  
Came to glitter here,  
Only for a moment,  
Then I disappear.

LADY BUG: (begins to sweep down cobwebs).

But the ray of sunshine  
Caught up in your heart,  
Tell me, will it disappear  
When you must depart?

DEW DROPS:

Not if you are passing,  
And upon your way,  
You should catch our glitter,  
We will ever stay.

LADY BUG: (sweeping)

Then, little Dew-drops,  
I have made you mine;  
And within my heart of hearts  
You will ever shine.

CHORUS OF DEW DROPS (as they leave the stage):-

We, the little dew drops  
Came to glitter here  
Only for a moment  
Then we disappear.

(exeunt Dew Drops)

SCENE II



## GYEM. MOTIVE.

GYEM: (From the window) Open the windows,  
Open the door,  
She's dusting off the parlor floor.

LADY BUG: (rushes to the house), Gyem, get out of my house.

GYEM: (sitting down carefully on the edge of the sill) When did you move, Lady Bug?

LADY BUG: I didn't move. I settled right next to Mr. Inchworm's acorn and then this house started to go up in the air, and now the best I can do is to call down to Bessie, (pointing) down thru the petals). See, that's their acorn house down there. (calling) Bessie, Bessie!

VOICE OF BESSIE: (coming from below) Good morning, Lady Bug.

LADY BUG: How are you this morning? Better?

VOICE: My rheumatism is pretty bad today.

LADY BUG: (to Gyem, sympathetically) You know she oughtn't to live down there, it's too damp. (To Bessie) Can't you come up as soon as Mr. Inchworm goes to work?

VOICE: If he only would go back to work. But he just wanders around grieving for Inchling.

LADY BUG: Ain't that too bad? Ain't that too bad?

GYEM: (laughing) I know something

I will tell

To the grazing sheep

With the weather bell! (Exit Gyem)

LADY BUG: (looking after him) What us widows has to stand for!

BESSIE'S VOICE: Mr. Snail started to come and see you yesterday.

LADY BUG: Where is he?

VOICE: Half way up the stalk.



LADY BUG: Oh dear, he won't be here until night. (Calling) Thank you for letting me know. I'll get the rugs up; he's so sticky. Come up as soon as you can and sit in the sun; it'll do you good, be good for your rheumatism.

(Lady Bug goes into the house to prepare for the visit of Mr. Snail)

### SCENE III

(Mr. Inchworm enters. He is climbing<sup>b</sup> up the morning glory stalk. He has a wide band of crepe on his arm and is very much out of breath. His head alone has appeared when he says):

MR. INCH: Good morning, Lady Bug!

(Lady Bug jumps because her back is turned, but as soon as she sees Mr. Inchworm she calls down)

LADY BUG: Goodness, Mr. Inchworm, you gave me such a turn. I didn't hear the bell. Did you ring before you started up?

MR. INCH: (out of breath) Oh, yes, I rang.

LADY BUG: I didn't hear you.

MR. INCH: But I rang twice.

LADY BUG: I know what the trouble is. It's the way this house is going up in the air. I have to have the electrician bug almost every week to lengthen out the wire and I know it must be broke again. Oh, dear, oh dear, that's how I didn't know Mr. Snail was coming up this morning. I might not have had time to get all the rugs up.

MR. INCH: (emerging slowly) It's a very long climb.

LADY BUG: (catching sight of the crepe on Mr. Inchworm's sleeve) Why, what has happened, Mr. Inchworm? Whatever can be the matter? whatever--whatever--whatever has happened? I know it must be something awful and I cannot bear to hear you tell it. But I want you to tell me right away so as not



to keep me all suspended, for I can't stand a shock, so please tell me at once.

MR. INCH: (weeping large tears like the oyster) I have lost my son, Inchling. I haven't seen him since the night of the ball. He went away.

LADY BUG: (weeping) Oh dearie me! Oh, dearie me! Oh, dearie me! How did he die?

MR. INCH: I think he got stepped on. (He stamps his foot significantly).

LADY BUG: It is a terrible disease, sure it is.

MR. INCH: What is?

LADY BUG: Getting stepped on (stamping her foot with emphasis) But maybe he ain't dead. No insect is dead until somebody steps on it, you know that. But then, there has been an awful lot of deaths this spring from that disease.

MR. INCH: Maybe so, maybe so.

LADY BUG: Them People Bugs is awful.

MR. INCH: I don't know why it is so hard to lose Inchling. He made me more trouble than all the rest of my seven hundred and ninety-nine sons put together, and I never seemed to be able to do anything with him, always wanting to fly. (jumping up and down) Always wanting to fly.

LADY BUG: I think that sassy little Butterfly put that into his head.

MR. INCH: No, that is just what I don't understand. He always wanted to do it from the first moment he crawled out of the egg.

LADY BUG: Of course if he had learned to fly he could never have got stepped on. It's strange how queer bugs have some of the most sensible ideas.



MR. INCH: Yes, I noticed that. But they generally have to explain it to me. Especially people Bugs. They don't seem to think much about Insect Bugs.

LADY BUG: People Bugs is awful, Mr. Inchworm, just awful. We bugs ain't safe from 'em. And until we passes laws that will keep them out of gardens and off pavements, life ain't worth living.

MR. INCH: Will they keep the laws?

LADY BUG: Of course, they got to keep the laws. Ain't we passing them for the good of the village?

(Enter Mrs. Bessie Inchworm).

MRS. INCH: Oh, they've seen Inchling!

MR. INCH AND LADY BUG (together): Who has?

MRS. INCH: Oh, I don't know, only I passed Mr. Snail on the way up and he told me that he had a dream, he dreamed that he saw Inchling and that he was flying!

MR. INCH: Calm yourself, my dear, think---Inchworms don't fly.  
(jumping up and down) It isn't possible!

MRS. INCH: Well Mr. Snail dreamed he saw him, and everything he dreams comes true.

MR. INCH: Mr. Snail is getting old, he ought to stop dreaming.

MRS. INCH: Oh, do come and talk to him with me.

MR. INCH: Isn't he coming here?

MRS. INCH: Yes, but he won't get here for a long while. Come and see him.

(During the following speech there is a tacit understanding between Mr. and Mrs. Inchworm that they will get away as soon as they possibly can, without hurting Lady Bug's feelings, whose flow of words blind her to the action necessary).

LADY BUG: (to Mrs. Inchworm) Oh, dear, Mr. Snail has been coming to



s see me for years! (getting up and following Mrs. Inchworm, who is being led away by Mr. Inchworm. She captures Mrs. Inchworm and leads her back to her seat). Now listen, my dear, sit down! (continuing) I have met him for the past week every day, I meet him when I go out. Now listen, my dear, sit down. I know he is coming to see me. Now listen my dear, sit down! And when I pass him on the way back he is still coming to call on me. Now listen my dear, sit down. Oh, dear it is ever so awkward.

MR. INCH: (Who has gradually gotten more and more irritated, bursting out) But we must meet----

LADY BUG: I tell you he is on his way up here to call on me. I don't have to look over the side of the daisy five times a day to know that. And there ain't anybody lives up here but me--so he is coming to see me.

MR. INCH: (beside himself) We can't wait any longer. We must go and hunt Inchling! (he grabs Mrs. Inchworm by the wrist and with Lady Bug holding to the other wrist, he drags them off the stage).

LADY BUG: (still repeating) Now listen, my dear, sit down!

(pause until the noise dies out)

#### SCENE IV

BUTTERFLY MOTIVE.

(Golden Wings enters slowly and wearily on the path).

GOLDEN WINGS: I cannot find him, I do not know where or how to look upon the ground--only the sky I know. If I had only learned to walk on the ground in place of flying.

(Enter Foreman, George and 2nd. Cutter, carrying a bolt of yellow cloth)



FOREMAN: Now we can go to work--it is lucky for us that Inchling died.

G W: Tell me, have you seen Inchling?

ALL THREE: (dropping bolt) We should hope not.

G W: But I am looking for him everywhere.

FOREMAN: We don't wish you any ill luck.

G W: But won't you help me hunt?

GEORGE: Help you hunt? Why don't you know if we found him we would have to go back to cutting out leaves again, and we want to do flowers! He brought us more bad luck than anything we ever had.

G W: (walking over to the ants) I don't understand. He left me the night of the Fire Fly dance, so long ago, and I have never been able to find him.

FOREMAN: Of course we are terribly sorry for you.

GEORGE: And of course, if we could do something----

ALL: But---

G W: (starts to weep)

FOREMAN: She's crying!

GEORGE: What can we do?

FOREMAN: We hurt her feelings!

2d CUTTER: Don't you think we could hunt just a little?

GEORGE: What? And give up the Poppy business just as we are starting?

FOREMAN: You know business isn't everything.

GEORGE: But we must help her.

2d CUTTER: But what can we do?

FOREMAN: Golden Wings, we'll have to discuss this subject a moment.  
(they draw over to the extreme path on the right) Of course we can't expect her to understand what this means to us.

GEORGE: But these bugs who fly about are just as much insects as



we are.

FOREMAN: You see they really haven't had a chance to know what this world is.

2d CUTTER: It's an awful thing to be born rich.

ALL: Awful!

FOREMAN: You see we worker bugs must set them an example.

GEORGE: Is there anyway we can help her?

FOREMAN: Sure, we can hunt.

2d CUTTER: But--

ALL: Let us agree! We do!

FOREMAN: (stepping out) Golden Wings, we are sorry for you and we are going to help you hunt for Inchling.

G W: Oh, thank you, ants. If I could only help you! I am so tired trying to learn to walk.

FOREMAN: You lie down and rest here. We will come back with him.

(Golden Wings, weary with her long hunt for Inchling, hesitates and finally, overcome with weariness, lies down on the tip of the petal)

GEORGE: (watching her) Poor Golden Wings. Well, here goes the Poppy business. (He throws the yellow bolt of cloth off the daisy as they leave).

#### SCENE V

(Fire Fly appears with the bolt of yellow cloth, rubbing his head).

FIRE FLY: I'd like to know who hit me on the head with this bundle,

I would. I'd just show 'em. We watching down there in case of a fire at Lady Bug's. (still nursing the bump on

his head, he turns and sees Golden Wings. He approaches on tip-toe and then withdraws quietly).

Oh, poor Golden Wings is asleep. She has wandered around so long looking for Inchling. I think I had better stay here and protect her. (he lies down on the tip of the petal far



to the left of the stage and has just settled himself when the head of the Terrible Mosquito is seen appearing slowly between the leaves. He withdraws cautiously. Golden Wings sleeps; Fire Fly has not moved. Suddenly from behind him four little mosquitos jump out and sit down "plump". The Fire Fly struggles helplessly). (The Terrible Mosquito climbs on the stage).

T M: (Viewing the entangled Fire Fly with great delight) Ha, Ha! We have him. His fire is in his tummy and he can't turn over. You see, my men; this is strategy. By it I have my enemy and my prize with one stroke. You will have your reward, never fear. (Approaching Golden Wings, he laughs a horrible silent laugh) at the Fire Fly). At last I have her. Now I will stick pin holes in the little girl. I will fill each hole with poison and I will stick them neatly in her arm, and then I will drink her blood. Gr-r-r-r-r-r-r-. Do you hear, little sailor? Do you hear what I am going to do with her, and we are going to do worse things to you. Gr-r-r-r-r-r-r-! We will drink her blood. Let me see what poison we have in this bag. (opens bag and looks over contents) Not that, no that is not strong enough. I must have some fresh poison. Oh! Here is a bottle <sup>A</sup> all yellow, that my uncle sent me from Panama. (reading label) Yellow Fever. I must try this, it will be bad, bad, bad, bad.

(He approaches and is crouching over Golden Wings when the Butterfly song is heard).

## VI

(The huge cocoon hanging high over the stage begins to descend. The Terrible Mosquito is shaking in every limb. He rushes to the edge of the stage. The cocoon opens and Inchling, dressed as a fairy prince with wings, steps out. The song stops).

INCHLING: (Unsheathing his sword to T Mosquito) Hold, villain, You shall die!

T MOSQUITO: Ah, ha, it's you! I'll have your blood.



FOREMAN: We will have to tell her we can't find him, and of course she will cry again.

GEORGE: I can't stand it when they cry.

2d CUTTER: (approaching Golden Wings) We are sorry we can't find Inchling.

G W: But don't you know him? Look, I have found him!

2d CUTTER: But the wings upon an Inchworm?

INCHLING: Yes, wings upon an Inchworm. It has come true!

(enter Mr. and Mrs. Inchworm).

INCHLING: (turning to meet his mother) Mother!

MR. INCH: What is this, my son with wings?

(Enter Fire Fly and Lady Bug, arm in arm).

GYEM MOTIVE:

(Gyem appears in the back of the stage above them)

GYEM: I can tell you, I am Gyem,  
I, to make a Wood God's dream,  
From a butterfly, one day,  
Stole a little egg away,  
Put it in an inchworm's nest,  
Let it hatch among the rest.  
Inchling need no longer try,  
He always was a butterfly!

(During Gyem's speech the insects have all come in and the Lady Bug stands with her eyes glued on the Fire Fly who, in his excitement, has forgotten to hide his flashes).

LADY BUG: Go away from here, you horried Fire Fly!

FIRE FLY: (kneeling <sup>b</sup>adjectly before her) Have pity on me, dear Lady Bug, they are only flashes of intelligence).

(A slowly moving Snail appears at the back of the stage).

ALL THE CAST: Look who's coming! It's Mr. Snail, it's Mr. Snail!



MR. SNAIL: (in a slow mechanical voice) I want to tell you that I  
saw Inch-----

ALL LITTLE ANIMALS IN CHORUS: (interrupting) It's too late, that  
play's all over.

(The Robin enters with The Mud. They stand on each side of him decorated with large red ties, and listen while he plays on a penny whistle).

GYEM: Spring is here!

(The butterfly song begins and the entire company, taking hands, dance along the footlights the entire length of the stage, joining in the song.

(Curtain).